



Frances Vail Russell

March 19, 1932 - June 18, 2016

Frances Vail Russell, of New Britain, widow of David Dickinson Russell, Jr., passed away unexpectedly, Saturday June 18, 2016 at the Hospital of Central CT in New Britain. Born in Hartford, Fran graduated from Oxford School, the Wheelock College in Boston and received her Masters in Early Education from CCSU. She has lived in New Britain since 1955. Mrs. Russell lovingly taught Kindergarten at Lincoln School for many years before her retirement. Since retirement, she was active at First Church of Christ, Congregational in New Britain; the YWCA, HOCC – New Britain General, and was a former President of the Auxiliary, also serving as a hospital corporator. She volunteered at the information desk, directing families from far and wide. She was active in the NBMAA, Art League of New Britain, New Britain Symphony, Art for the Cure, Race for the Cure, and Corporator of the Klingberg Family Center. She was a former Board Member of the Junior League of Greater New Britain.

Surviving are three daughters, Linda Sniadack of Kensington; Ann Dilling and her husband Steven of New Britain; and Elizabeth Sibicky and her husband Charles of Griswold; a sister, Hazel B. Vail of West Hartford; and seven grandchildren, Christine and William Sniadack, Joseph, Thomas and James Dilling, and David Sibicky and his wife Brandy, and Christopher Sibicky and his wife Stephanie.

Funeral services will be held Friday 10 AM at First Church of Christ Congregational, 830 Corbin Avenue, New Britain. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family. Calling hours will be held Thursday 5 to 7 PM at Carlson Funeral Home, 45 Franklin Square, New Britain. Instead of donations going to a charity: "Any donation should be made in the form of help and service to the community or kindness and love to someone in need". Please share a memory or note of sympathy by clicking on "Send Condolences" at the bottom of this page.

Tribute Wall

CC

“ Dear Linda, Ann and Elizabeth,
I have just learned that your mother passed away in June. I am so sorry to hear this. When I was the Executive Director at the YWCA, I had the privilege of working closely with Fran as she was on the board at that time. I just loved your mother! She was smart, thoughtful, caring and funny! When I think of her, I always smile. I hope you are all doing well. I'm certain that your mother's love continues to surround you and comfort you.

Sincerely,
Cathy-Lynne Coyle
Burlington CT

Cathy-Lynne Coyle - March 10, 2017 at 04:32 PM

JT

“ My condolences to Mrs. Russell's whole family. She was my kindergarten teacher at Lincoln School back in 1986. She was a great teacher! I can remember she was so proud of my penmanship that she brought me over, and showed it to Mrs. Sawicki! She will definitely be remembered!

Jennifer Tillman - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ I was shocked to hear of Fran's passing and will always remember her smile, her wit and her dedication when it came to getting a job done. Will cherish the memories of working with her. Surely a loss to the community. Condolences to her family. But how lucky were they all to have her as their sister, mom, and grandmother. Sincerely,
MaryEllen

MaryEllen Fillo - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DC

“ Linda, Ann and Liz, I am so sorry for your loss. Your mother was a wonderful person who will be dearly missed. She was very close to my mom for 50 years and I'm so glad I still got to see her smiling face from time to time. This sad situation has made me think back to growing up next door to all of you and the good times we had. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you and hope our paths cross again.

Donna Crowley - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AB

“ WHAT A PRIVILEGE IT WAS TO HAVE HAD FRAN IN OUR LIVES. I WILL MISS OUR WONDERFUL SHARED LUNCHEES WHERE WE WOULD SOLVE ALL KINDS OF PROBLEMS. SHE WAS SMART,PRACTICAL,SENSIBLE, AND A REAL LADY IN THE TRUEST SENSE OF THE WORD.ABE AND I SEND OUR HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES AS YOU MOURN HER PASSING. HOW BLESSED WE ALL WERE TO HAVE HAD HER IN OUR LIVES.WHAT A WONDERFUL FAMILY SHE LEAVES TO MOURN HER PASSING. WE SEND OUR LOVE...ABE AND ESTELLE BERNSTEIN

ABE AND ESTELLE BERNSTEIN - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ I am sorry for your loss, your Mom was a wonderful person and will be missed by many. I frequently ran into her at the hospital and she always had a smile on her face

Jack Crowley - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JP

“ Thank you for being my mother's best friend and over the years becoming a part of my life. You were like an Aunt to me and very special in every way. I will always be grateful for the laughter that you brought, the memories that were made and you always being by our side and part of our family. There will be an empty spot in my heart where you will be truly missed.

Julie pollowitz - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BC

“ Linda, Ann and Liz, I am so very sorry to hear that your mom passed. She was an awesome lady and a real class act. I have such great memories of our days on Stanwood. It was good to see you all but I wish it was under different circumstances.

Bill Crowley - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ My heartfelt condolences to the family of Fran Russell. Although I have known Fran a little over 2 years as a volunteer at HOCC, she has always been kind and so very passionate about her volunteer work, her dedication to the Auxiliary and to the hospital. She was a very special lady and she will be missed.

Diamond Belejack, Volunteer Services - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RK

“ Dear Ann, you and your family are in our prayers at this time of sorrow. May God receive her soul and grant her eternal peace. May God bless and comfort you in your mourning.

*With deepest sympathy,
Rev. Joseph Keough and your St Peter Parish family.*

Rev. Joseph Keough - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

FF

“ *She was a beautiful lady inside and out. Always looking so lovely and being so thoughtful. We felt honored that we knew her. We will miss her and the city of New Britain will miss her. Sincerely, Gladys and Fenmore Feigenbaum*

Fenmore and Gladys Feigenbaum - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SF

“ *Fran was an angel on earth! She had a special way about her that made everyone around her feel cared for and loved! My husband was fortunate to have her as his kindergarten teacher and I was able to start my teaching career with her 32 years ago. We will always hold a special place for her in our hearts for her. Linda, Christine and William please accept our condolences. Sending love and prayers your way.*

Sandy and John Fraioli - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AP

“ My heartfelt condolences to the family on their loss of such a great woman who had such an impact on so many lives.

When I started in my role as Director of Volunteer Services at NBGH, Fran was among the first to warmly welcome me and was someone who I could call upon at a moment's notice over the next 21 years to help me. She was the voice of reason when faced with any dilemma and I was fortunate enough to be able to tap into her invaluable wealth of knowledge and history.

Fran epitomized class, elegance and decency. I've been proud to have her as a friend all these years and will miss her terribly.

To Linda, Christine and the rest of the family, find comfort in the fact that she lived her life doing things that she truly enjoyed; even to the end and was always able to be that fiercely independent woman that we all love and admire.

Anne Phelan - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Fran is the "poster child" for dedicated, excellent educator; unconditional, loyal friend; and loving, caring, self-less human being! Her energy is legendary, and her common sense, wit, and intelligence were a gift to us all. Teaching with her was an honor! The children of New Britain "thank you" - you will be missed. Love and sympathy to her family, Maryann and Dom Ferrara, Tucson

Maryann and Dom Ferrara - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AS

“ I first met Fran when I joined the Board of Directors of the New Britain Symphony and she was, at that time, serving as Recording Secretary. I was immediately struck by her commitment and dedication to preserving the Fine Arts in New Britain. I had no idea that this was just a small part of her life of volunteerism.

I frequently told Fran that she was my hero and I feel this succinctly describes the impact she has had on my life. It was Fran who first contacted me about coming onto the Auxiliary Board at New Britain General. This initial contact led to my involvement at the hospital and shortly after, I began my hours at the Information Desk along side of Fran. Fran has been the example that I have attempted to emulate. Her selfless giving and dedication inspired me as I followed in her footsteps by serving as President of the Auxiliary Board.

I quickly learned that if a question needed answering, Fran was the "go to" person. Her extensive knowledge of hospital history made her an invaluable resource. When a task needed to be completed, a new project tackled, or a time slot at the desk to be filled, Fran's was the first name that came to everyone's mind. Fran had time for everything and everyone!

I believe that not a day went by when Fran wasn't at the hospital fulfilling one of her many roles. She once told me that after her husband died, even though she could have continued teaching, she decided that there were just too many things she wanted to do. So upon early retirement, those "things" she spoke of did not include world travel or an extravagant lifestyle, but rather one of service to her community. This service spanned decades and impacted hundreds of lives.

I want to be just like Fran "when I grow up". Frannie was my hero and my beloved friend and I will miss her dearly.

Annette Salina - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AP

“ *Our condolences...Fran was a lovely person. RIP*

Arlene & Dan Palmer - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ *So shocked to see this. Sending so much love to Lizzie, Linda and the entire extended Russell family. Fran was an extraordinary woman, and she leaves an extraordinary legacy. Such heartfelt condolences... Love, Katie and Craig*

Katie & Craig Betancourt - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

EK

“ *Once a year, in the Spring, I would get a call from Fran to volunteer for the annual NBMAA Gala. As soon as I heard her distinctive voice I knew who she was. So lovely and also so very hard to say "no" to. She will definitely be missed.*

Ellen Kask - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

HD

“ *Our sincere sympathy on the loss of your beloved mother and grandmother.*

HOCC Development - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ *Dear Linda and family, Was so sorry to learn of your Mom's passing. Just saw her a week or so ago at the annual meeting of The Hospital for Special Care, and am glad to have said hi. She was a very special person. I will always remember her smile and kindness. Please accept my sympathy, kind thoughts, and prayers. Sincerely, Jim*

Jim McNair - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SE

“ Sorry for your loss. I still can remember how excited I was to be in her Kindergarten class. I specifically remember her teaching me my right and left, and pinning little notes on my collar right before we left, reading to the class, and how she played the piano daily. Amazing memories to this day I remember , and I am now 40!

Sarah Tyrrell Entenza - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AL

“ Dear Linda, Ann and Liz,
I was so sorry to hear about Fran's passing. It's so hard to lose a mom as I know, and Fran was a special neighbor, mom and friend to me all my life. I have such fond memories of our visits after I moved,her gardening and enjoying her evening cocktails with me. She will always be remembered with love and I know this is a hard time for all of you but keep remembering her with love and a smile. I wish I could be there for the service but cannot. Ann Linton

Ann Linton - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RT

“ I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Mrs. Russell. I had her as my teacher back in 1972. I still remember her. She was the most kind and sweetest teachers I have ever had. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you during this difficult time. She will be missed by many.

Rina D'Amario - Taft

Rina Taft - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AF

“ I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Mrs. Russell. I was never in one of her classes but always wanted to be. She had one of the most popular classes at Lincoln elementary school. I am 42 yrs old and still remember her as if it were yesterday. She was a beautiful kind hearted teacher. One of the most dedicated to her students and all of us children attending Lincoln. I remember all of the kids wanting to get into her class. It was an honor to know her. She was fair to all students. It is with my deepest sympathy to her hear of her psssing. I lost my dad several weeks ago and can feel your pain. I know it is had but she is now with our Lord in a better place. I know it's hard on your family now. I picture her happy back in the classroom. She had changed the life many who have gone on to succeed if it wasn't for her. God bless her family and our prayers are with you at this time.

Andrea River Flahertu - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

CG

“ I have been searching for his woman for years !! So sad to see she has passed but so happy she lived a long happy life , she was my kindergarden teacher in 1988 , I loved her so so so much I remembered her my whole life , she taught me how to learn and have fun and she was so loving and sweet and always happy to be teaching : I am so happy I got to be in her class , she is still my favorite teacher I have ever had !!! She made a great impact on my life and set the bar high for other teachers , I started school when I was 4 years old she made me not afraid and she comforted me when I needed .. Thank you for being the best teacher in the world to me xoxox love always Crystal

Crystal guyette - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

GP

“ My deepest condolences to the family from my family she was a amazing woman she my oldest daughter was the teacher pet in kindergarten may she r.l.p.

Grace Pearson - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MJ

“ I am sorry for your loss. I know it is a very painful time for you. My daughter Susan Curtis Tubbs had Fran as a kindergarten teacher in 1986 and she never forgot us as we didnt her. It seemed whenever we went to NBGH she was sitting at the front desk and 30 years later she still recognized and remembered us well. Linda and I went to high school together and I worked with her and I believe Liz NBGH. I will pray for Fran of course she is in heaven and your family. Mary James

Mary James - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

LN

“ Ann & Steven and Family,,,, I am so sorry Ann about your Mother!! If you remember all the good times with your Mom it will bring a smile to your face!!

Laura Niewinski - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM